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NO SURPRISES IN RUSSIAN POLLS AS PUTIN IS ALL SET TO RETAIN POWER

Three days of voting came to an end on Sunday. Three candidates, who are Kremlin-friendly, were Putin's rivals in the Presidential elections

OPPOSITION ASKS VOTERS TO COME LATE

Notably, rival candidates have not criticised Putin's 24-year rule or his invasion of Ukraine two years ago. His fiercest opponent Alexei Navalny died in Arctic prison last month. Before his death, Navalny had endorsed an opposition call asking those who are unhappy with Putin to come to polling station at noon on Sunday. It is not clear if this call was a success

PROTESTERS THROW INK IN BALLOT BOXES

- Multiple cases of vandalism were reported at polling stations. A woman threw a firebomb at a polling station entrance and many across the country were detained for throwing ink into ballot boxes
- Western leaders have called the Russian election a travesty of democracy. And, there are no international observers for polls | P9

2036

RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION ALLOWS PUTIN TO STAY IN OFFICE FOR 12 MORE YEARS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Rahul ends yatra in Mumbai, says EVMs win polls for BJP

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday tore into the Bharatiya Janata Party as he addressed the closing rally of his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Mumbai. Alleging that the saffron party wins elections because of EVMs, he said his party went to the election commission to show them how it operates. "But the election commission refuses to do that. Why? Voters should know whether their vote is really going to the person to whom they voted for," he said.

Rahul said the people will believe the Congress' five guarantees rather than Naredra Modi's guarantees and will vote for the grand old party in the Lok Sabha elections. He highlighted the Congress' promises of legalising the minimum support price in favour of farmers and overhauling the GST regime to get rid of taxation on agricultural materials.

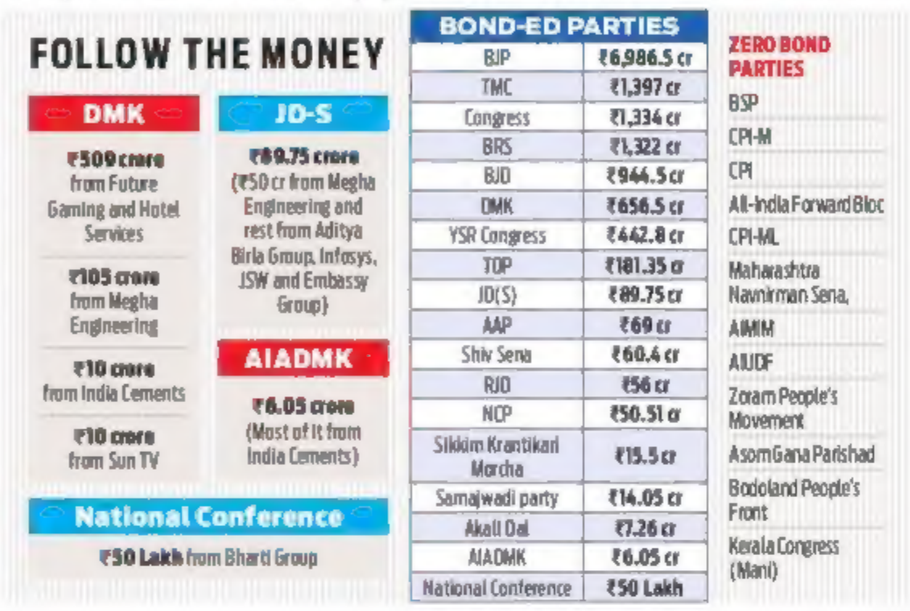
The mega rally was attended by most INDIA bloc allies. However, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav did not attend. The Left parties also skipped the rally. During his yatra, Rahul travelled 4,000 km and understood people's problems, he said. Chiding the media for not doing its job and working for the establishment, Rahul said,

He alleged that BJP is misusing the central agencies to poach the Opposition leaders. He claimed a senior Congress leaders from Maharashtra who recently joined the BJP had told Sonia Gandhi that he was do so under duress. The leader said if he does not join BJP, he would be put in jail, he added.

Rahul along with Priyanka, Tushar Gandhi (in green), great-grandson of the Mahatma, at a padayatra in Mumbai on Sunday | PTI

Latest EB data show parties love to hide than disclose

Only DMK, AIADMK, JD(S) and NC revealed names of donors



MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) on Sunday uploaded the remaining data on the purchase and redemption of electoral bonds that political parties had shared with it and which was submitted to the Supreme Court in a sealed cover. The ECI published the details after it got the sealed cover back from the apex court. Parties had filed data on electoral bonds in sealed cover as directed by the apex court's interim order of April 12, 2019.

The fresh disclosure by the ECI shows that only a few parties — DMK, AIADMK, JD(S), and National Conference — have revealed the name of their donors.

The poll panel's latest disclosure is part of the data dump pertaining to a total of 523 recognised and non-recognised parties made public on the Supreme Court's orders. According to reports, the latest data pertain to the period before April 12, 2019.

"Data so received from political parties was deposited in the Supreme Court without opening sealed covers. In pursuance of the SC's order of March 15, the Registry of the Supreme Court has returned physical copies along with a digitized record of the same in a pen drive in sealed cover. The Election Commission has uploaded the data received in the digitized form from the registry of the Supreme Court on electoral bonds on its website," EC said.

The fresh disclosure by the ECI is part of the data dump pertaining to a total of 523 recognised and non-recognised parties made public following a direction by the Supreme Court. This was followed by another dataset published by the ECI last week after SBI shared with it. SBI was sole bank authorised to sell and redeem now defunct electoral bonds.

The data show that BJP has got the highest funds at ₹6,986.50 cr, followed by TMC at ₹1,397 cr, and Congress ₹1,334 cr. The latest disclosure is based on the declarations given by parties in November last year on the bonds redeemed by them since the scheme was launched in early 2018. It includes scanned copies of the disclosures by parties, running into hundreds of pages.

WELCOME DROPS

Relief from heat, expect rain next two to three days

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

HERE is some good news. Karnataka, facing an acute shortage of water due to severe drought, is expected to get light to moderate showers in south-interior and Malnad regions in the next two to three days. Bidar and Kalaburagi witnessed some rain on Sunday.

Former director of the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre Srinivas Reddy said there is a cloud formation in south-interior Karnataka and Malnad regions. Also, a trough seen near Tamil Nadu will have some impact on Karnataka.

"From March 20 or 21, there will be shower for two to three days," he said. This will not help fill up dams or increase groundwater levels. "But any rain will help as it will bring down temperature for some time. People should harvest this water. Any amount of rain harvesting will help as it will reduce the burden on drinking water," he said.

Officials said 36-40 mm of rain is expected in April and 86 mm in May. The India Meteorological Department has forecast a good monsoon this year. "We are hoping for good rain from July," Reddy said.

According to KSNDMC data, temperature is 1 to 3 degrees Celsius above normal in some parts of the state. The state government has already declared 223 taluks drought-prone.

Meanwhile, major reservoirs in the state continue to see a dip in water levels. Of the total capacity of 895.62 tmcft in 123 major reservoirs, the present level is 284 tmcft, as against 386 tmcft last year.

Int'l students of Guj varsity attacked over prayer row, MEA intervenes

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

STUDENTS hailing from different foreign countries were allegedly assaulted by a mob in the Gujarat University hostel in Ahmedabad for offering namaz in the facility's building, police said on Sunday. A student from Sri Lanka and another from Tajikistan had to be hospitalised.

Ahmedabad Police Commissioner GS Malik said an FIR was registered against 20-25 people and they will be arrested soon.

According to police sources, the incident was reported at around 10.50 pm on March 16 when two dozen people barged into the hostel and objected to students offering namaz in the facility where they stayed.

The students pointed out that there is no mosque on the Ahmedabad-based campus. So, they had assembled inside the hostel to perform taraweeh, a nightly prayer during Ramadan. A student from Afghanistan said that a mob came to the hostel and shouted slogans, questioning their right to pray in the hostel. "They assaulted us within our rooms, destroying laptops, phones, and vandalizing bikes," he said.

The student mentioned among the five injured individuals, there is one from Afghanistan, one from Sri Lanka, one from Turkmenistan, and two from African nations.

Sources said the hostel's security guards tried to intervene but the assailants continued to assault the students. There are around 300 international students enrolled at the Gujarat University. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the state government is taking decisive action against those responsible.

Royal Challengers Bangalore are crowned champions during the final of the Women's Premier League 2024 in New Delhi on Sunday | SPORTZPICS

EE SALA CUP NAMDU!

Delhi Capitals once again fell short in the final as Royal Challengers Bangalore were crowned the champions of the second season of the WPL in New Delhi...

SHAFALI VERMA PACKS A PUNCH IN POWERPLAY

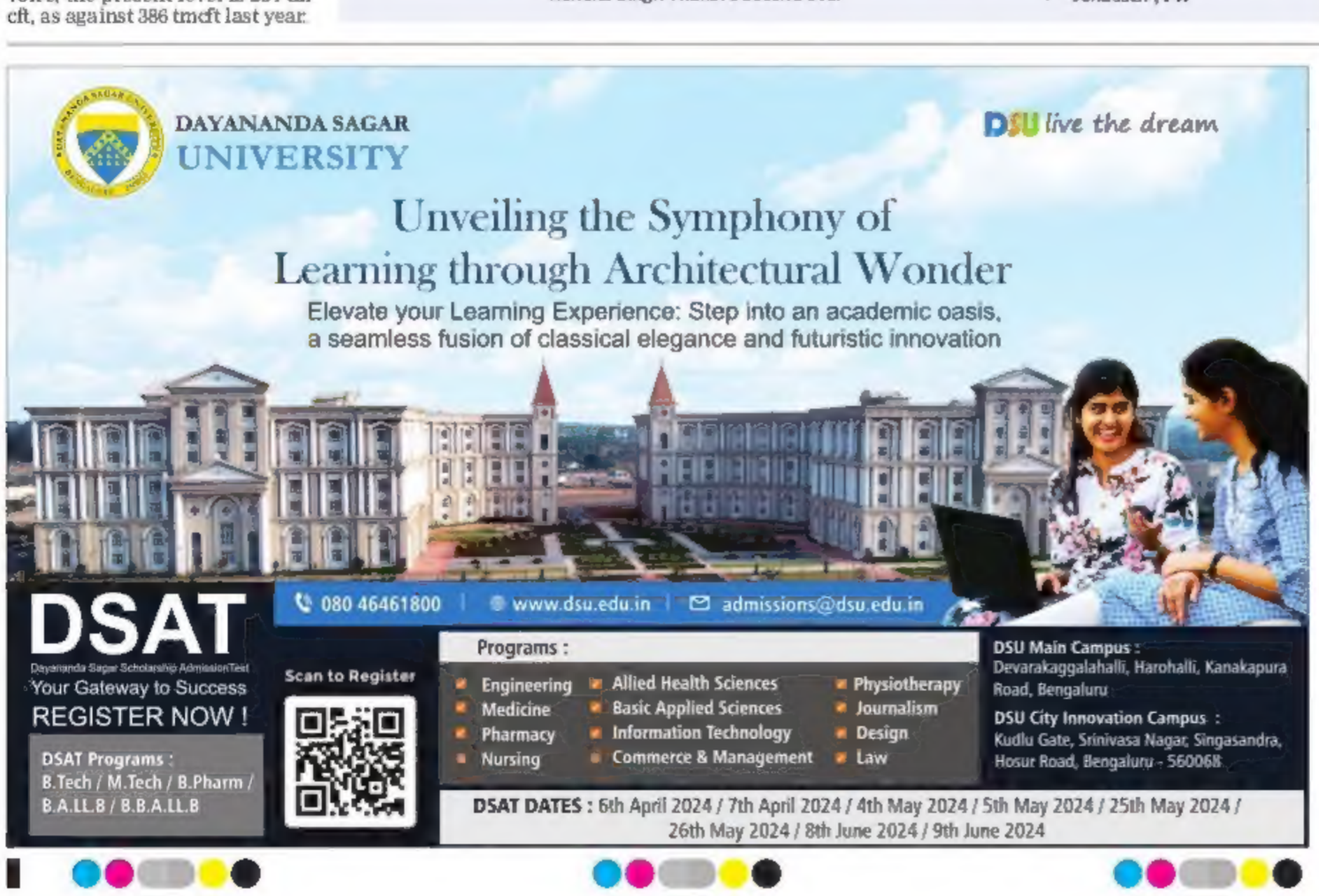
On a surface where every batter found it hard to get a start, Shafali Verma breezed through the powerplay with 42 runs off just 21 balls, which included two fours and three sixes. Over her hitting spree, she smashed 19 runs off Renuka Singh Thakur's second over

SOPHIE MOLINUEX'S PERFECT OVER

With Delhi Capitals flying at 9.14 runs per over, Molinuex broke open the game with an over with three wickets in an over. It started with the wicket of Verma off the first ball. Verma tried to hit the Australian over the ropes only to find the fielder. Jemimah Rodrigues and Alice Capsey followed. DC never recovered and were bowled out for 113

FOUR FOR SHREYANKA

Shreyanka Patil, who missed out on a few matches in the tournament, came back in style to take four wickets in the final to dismantle DC's hopes. With 13 wickets in the season, she became the highest wicket-taker of the season taking over the likes of Marizanne Kapp and Jess Jonassen | P11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DSAT DATES : 6th April 2024 / 7th April 2024 / 4th May 2024 / 5th May 2024 / 25th May 2024 / 26th May 2024 / 8th June 2024 / 9th June 2024